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CHARACTER AND LIFE OF GEORGE FOX.

A PERSON of genuine candour and impartiality will be gratified in discovering evidences of piety and goodness in men of the various denominations, and in men whose opinions are different from his own. If he has been under any misapprehension in respect to the character of any one of his fellow men—if by education he has been led to form an unfavourable opinion of a good man, he will rejoice in having his eyes opened and his mistake corrected.

It is a melancholy fact that a great portion of the intelligence which people in general obtain of the characters of men who belong to a sect that dissents from their opinions, is derived through the contaminating medium of prejudice and calumny. In consequence of this, many of the best men have been regarded as the worst. What would now have been our opinions of Christ and his Apostles had our information all been derived from the reproaches of their persecutors, the unbelieving priests, scribes and pharisees! Should we not have regarded the Messiah as a blasphemer, an impos-

tor, one who travelled about in Judea as an itinerant preacher, deceiving the people, and leading them blindfold to destruction! Such unquestionably would have been our opinions, if such only had been the sources of our information. Is it not then possible and even probable, that very false ideas are yet entertained by many of the character of George Fox, the founder of the society of Friends. For both in England and in this country our fore-fathers persecuted the Quakers; and the information which many have had of G. Fox, has been derived from the reports of persecutors, handed down from father to son.

In giving the character of a man who lived 150 years ago we have occasion to employ the testimonies of his friends, or those of his enemies. Those of enemies are seldom worthy of credit, except so far as they are in his favour. Those of friends are often more favourable than strict impartiality can justify.

In respect to G. F. we have the testimony of two men of liberal education, who were inti-

mately acquainted with him—Wm. Penn, and Thomas Ellwood. People of this country are far less acquainted with the character of the latter than with that of the former. But from an extract which will be given from Ellwood, it will appear that he was a man of intelligence and a good writer. The character of Penn is too well known to need further commendation, to entitle him to credit as a witness. Few men of the age in which he lived gave more evidence of a powerful mind, unspotted integrity, and disinterested benevolence.

Let us then hear the testimony of Wm. Penn in regard to George Fox :—

“ He was,” says Penn, “ a man that God endowed with a clear and wonderful depth : a discerner of other men’s spirits, and very much a master of his own.—In his ministry he endeavoured to open the truth to the people’s understanding.—He had an extraordinary gift in opening the scriptures ; and would go to the marrow of things, and show the mind, harmony and fulfilling of them, with much plainness, and to great comfort and edification.

“ But above all, he excelled in *prayer*. The inwardness and weight of his spirit, the reverence and solemnity of his address and behaviour, the fewness and the fulness of his words, have often struck even strangers with admiration,—as they used to reach others with consolation. The most awful, living, reverend frame I ever felt or beheld, I must say was his in prayer. And truly it was a testimony he knew and lived

nearer to the Lord than other men ; for they that know him most, will see most reason to approach him with reverence and fear.”

“ In the establishment of discipline, he met with much opposition from many who had been his own friends.” Wm. Penn in describing the conduct of G. F. under these trials, says —“ He bore all their weakness and prejudice, and returned not reflection for reflection : but forgave them their weak and bitter speeches. And truly I must say, that though God had visibly clothed him with a divine preference and authority, and indeed his very presence expressed a religious majesty : yet he never abused it, but held his place in the church of God with great meekness, and a most engaging humility and moderation. For upon all occasions, like his blessed Master, he was a servant of all, holding and exercising his eldership, in the invisible power which had gathered them, with reverence to the Head, and care for the body. I write my knowledge, and not report ; and my witness is true ; having been with him for weeks and months together, on divers occasions, and those of the nearest and most exercising nature ; and that by night and by day, by sea and by land, in this and in foreign countries ; and I can truly say, I never saw him out of his place, or not a match for every service and occasion.”

It is also affirmed of G. F. by W. Penn, that “ he was of an innocent life, no busybody, no selfseeker, neither touchy nor critical : what fell from him

was very inoffensive, if not very edifying. So meek, contented, modest, easy, steady, it was a pleasure to be in his company. A most merciful man : as ready to forgive, as unapt to take or give offence."

His biographer, Henry Tuke, has the following remark on G. Fox. "Though some expressions which he occasionally used to those whom he considered as persecutors and enemies to the truth, might be plainer, or coarser than would now be thought proper : yet this is confined to the early part of his writings, and may be imputed to the zealous manners of the times, and to the honest indignation which he felt against all violations of conscience,—and particularly against the hypocrisy and deceit of many who opposed and persecuted him."

We may now introduce the testimony of Thomas Ellwood : "I knew him not till the year 1660 : but from that time I knew him well, conversed with him often, observed him much, loved him dearly, and honoured him truly : and, upon good experience, can say, he was indeed a heavenly minded man, zealous for the name of the Lord, and preferred the honour of God before all things."

"He was valiant for the truth, bold in asserting it, patient in suffering for it, unwearied in labouring in it, steady in his testimony to it—immovable as a rock—deep he was in divine knowledge—clear in opening heavenly mysteries—plain and powerful in preaching— fervent in prayer—he was richly endued with heavenly wisdom, quick in discerning, sound

in judgment, able and ready in giving, discreet in keeping counsel ; a lover of righteousness ; an encourager of virtue, justice, temperance, meekness, purity, chastity, modesty, humility, charity and self-denial in all, both by word and example. Graceful he was in countenance, manly in personage, grave in gesture, courteous in conversation, weighty in communication, instructive in discourse, free from affectation in speech or carriage. A severe reprobator of hard and obstinate sinners ; a mild and gentle admonisher of such as were tender and sensible of their failings. Not apt to resent personal wrongs, easy to forgive injuries ; but zealously earnest when the honour of God, the prosperity of truth, or the peace of the church was concerned. Very tender, compassionate and pitiful he was to all that were in any sort of affliction, full of brotherly love, full of fatherly care : for indeed the care of the churches of Christ was daily upon him, the prosperity and peace whereof he studiously sought.—He lived and died the servant of the Lord."

Such are the testimonies of two eye and ear witnesses, Penn and Ellwood : witnesses perhaps as impartial as any who have written the life of a Minister of their own denomination. After all the abatement which candour can make for their attachment to the founder of their Society, and for their agreement with him in opinion, their testimony will still be strong in favour of the moral qualities of George Fox : his character will still appear very different from

that which was given him by his persecutors.

Had we room for it, the testimony of these witnesses might be corroborated by many facts and occurrences, recorded of this man: but we can give only a few particulars of his life, his ministry, and his sufferings.

George Fox was born in 1624. In his youth, such was the gravity of his mind and the purity of his morals, that some of his relations desired that he might be educated for the ministry: but others objected, and he never had many advantages for education. He however appears to have been a man of an inquisitive and reflecting mind. conceiving that he was called of God to declare the truths of the gospel, he commenced preaching in the time of Charles I. in 1647, being then about 23 years of age.—He died in his sixtieth year, Dec. 13th, 1690.

In the course of his ministry he travelled through all the counties of England and Wales—some of them he visited many times. But his labours were not confined to England and Wales. He visited Scotland and Ireland, Holland and Germany, the islands of Jamaica and Barbadoes and the colonies of North America. He landed at Maryland—came as far north as Newport, in Rhode-Island—went back to Maryland, and then visited Virginia and Carolina before his return to England.

His success in gaining proselytes to his views of religion was very great. This may appear from some facts, not very honourable to his opposers. In about 13 years from the time he

commenced his ministry, King Charles the II. having come to the throne, “about seven hundred Friends, who were imprisoned for their religious principles were now set at liberty.” Such was the intolerance of the times under the reign of Cromwell and the reign of Presbyterianism in England! But although Charles the II. began his reign with an intention to allow his subjects the rights of conscience, this intention was interrupted by an insurrection of a sect called the *fifth monarchy men*. This occasioned a great commotion. “All dissenters, it seems, were involved in suspicion, and their meetings attempted to be suppressed.” Although the Quakers had no concern in the insurrection, they were involved in the intolerant proceedings which followed. Within two years George Fox and Richard Hubberthorn made a statement to the King respecting the sufferings that had been endured by the Friends, in which they say—“that three thousand one hundred and seventy-three persons of their Society had been imprisoned during the Commonwealth—thirty-two of whom had died, and seventy-three still remained in prison. They also stated that since the King’s restoration, three thousand and sixty-eight of their friends had been imprisoned, besides many other sufferings to which they had been subjected.”

In addition to several instances of violent and abusive treatment, in which his own life was greatly endangered, G. Fox was himself many times imprisoned. In prison, he sometimes endured the most inhuman treatment:

in one instance his imprisonment was prolonged two years, in another three.

Integrity and intrepidity were perhaps the most remarkable traits in the character of this man. No threatenings, no sufferings, no terrors, were sufficient to deter him from what he believed to be his duty, nor to induce him in any case to violate his principles or his conscience. Whether in the presence of Cromwell, or of the Judges of Courts, he appears to have been as perfectly free from the "fear of men," as if they had been children of ten years old. He was often cast into prison for pretended crimes. When brought before a Court nothing could be proved against him; but the Judges, knowing that he believed all swearing to be unlawful, would tender to him the oath of allegiance; and because he would not swear, he was immediately remanded back to prison. For a great portion of the time that he was imprisoned, refusing to take the oath was the *only* charge against him.

To show the confidence which even his enemies had in his integrity one case out of a number may be stated. Early in the reign of Charles II. Fox was imprisoned at Lancaster upon a charge of "embroiling the nation in blood." By the intercession of some friends he was ordered to London for trial. The sheriff at first wished to impose upon him the expense of escorting him with a party of horse; but Fox refused to comply with his terms. At length the sheriff concluded to let him go without any guard, upon his

giving encouragement that he would be in London on a certain day. Thus he was permitted to go, and carry the *complaint against himself* a distance perhaps of 200 miles. He appeared at the time appointed and presented the complaint. The court read it, and then he informed them that he was the man against whom that complaint was made. As the court could not try him that day, they called for a marshal to secure him; but as the prisons were full, they concluded to let him provide for himself, if he would engage to appear on the next day. This he promised with the condition, "If the Lord give me strength." Upon which one of the judges said to the other—"If he says yes, and promises it, you may take his word." He accordingly appeared, and on the complaint's being read, he again acknowledged himself to be the man accused with "embroiling the nation in blood." He then reasoned with the court to show the utter improbability of the truth of the complaint, on the ground that he had been permitted to come from "Lancaster without any guard, or even giving bail for his appearance." At this time he was soon liberated.

In the year 1663 he was arrested on suspicion of his being concerned in a plot against the King. He heard of the warrant in season to have made his escape, but lest such a measure should be regarded as evidence of guilt, he suffered himself to be taken. He was tried by four justices; but no evidence appeared against him. Still to insure and imprison him they

tendered the oath of allegiance. This he refused, and of course was sent to prison. On this ground he was continued in prison *two years*. He was several times examined, but he as often refused to take the oath. It appears to have been the custom in that day, on taking an oath, to kiss the Bible. At one of his trials when the oath was tendered, he replied, "Ye have given me a book to kiss; but the book says *kiss the Son*, and the Son says in this book, *swear not at all*. I say as the book says, yet ye imprison me. How comes it that the book is at liberty amongst you which bids me not swear, and yet ye imprison me for doing as the book bids me."

From a multitude of his imprisonments and trials one case more may be selected, which I think was the last that is mentioned by his biographer. He was imprisoned at Worcester; and on trial, by an iniquitous course of proceeding, he was sent to jail in a manner which seems to have precluded all chance for deliverance, except either by a pardon from the King, or by having the validity of his indictment tried before the King's bench. The King was consulted and was willing to grant a pardon. But as *pardon* implied *guilt* in the person who received it, Fox declined liberation on such terms. The matter was therefore brought before the King's bench, and he was removed to London for trial. The celebrated Judge Hale was then on the bench. The indictment was examined and declared void. But some of his enemies being in court, they

again proposed the snare of an oath, alleging that he was "a dangerous man to be at liberty." Judge Hale replied—"I have indeed heard some such reports; but I have also heard *many good reports*."—"He therefore, with the other Judges, ordered the prisoner to be liberated by proclamation."

It is perhaps a very general opinion that the principal Quakers of the present day are much better informed and more cultivated than were their predecessors in the days of Fox. There are two ways in which this opinion may be accounted for:—

First. The prejudices against the Quakers have been gradually wearing away; they are viewed with other eyes than they formerly were; little has been known by other denominations of those who lived in the days of Fox, besides what has come to them in the form of reproach; but they have other mediums of information respecting those of the present age.

Second. The opinion is probably founded in the truth of facts. I would however ask, Of what denomination may not the same thing be affirmed? Let any one impartially read the histories of the age in which Fox lived and compare the principal characters of the several denominations, with those of the same denomination at the present time, and what will be the result? Or if he shall compare the *rulers* and the *clergy* of other denominations in that day, with Fox, Barclay, Penn and Ellwood, taking into view the disparity of numbers—what denomination will find much

ground for boasting in regard to their ancestors of that age?

Let it not however be inferred that the writer of this article has any idea that G. Fox was an *infallible* man, or that all his opinions were correct; for this is not the fact. It is believed that great injustice has been done to sects and to individuals, as well as unspeakable injury to the cause of religion, and dis-honour to God, by limiting all *piety* and *goodness* to this or that sect, or connecting them exclusively with this or that human creed or confession of faith. To eradicate such ill founded and injurious prejudices, the characters of men of various denominations have been exhibited in the Christian Disciple; that people of different opinions may learn to regard each other as brethren, to seek each others' good, and approve whatever is

lovely and excellent, in whomsoever it may be found.

For these purposes we have exhibited with approbation the characters of some Papists and some Protestants, some Trinitarians and some Anti-Trinitarians, some Calvinists, some Arminians and some Quakers. This however has not been done from an indifference to religious opinions, nor from a disposition to approve the errors of any sect; but from a belief that every man is accountable for his faith to God only—from a consciousness of personal liability to err,—and from a full conviction that those things which have been made the dividing points between different sects have generally been things *not essential* to a christian character, and that, in a multitude of instances, *error itself* has been made the *test of piety and goodness*.

A PLAN FOR SECURING AND REFORMING CONVICTS.

IT has become a serious question, whether capital punishments are either necessary or useful, and whether some method may not be devised more beneficial both to the community and to the criminal. As all human institutions are capable of being amended, and as improvements are naturally suggested by comparing and discussing different plans; we shall give an abstract of an important article in an English periodical work,—in which Mr. Bentham's proposition to the British Parliament is brought to view:—The article referred to in the Philanthropist

is entitled, “On Houses of safe custody and industry for convicted criminals.” No. 3, p. 228.

The subject which has already occupied a considerable portion of our pages, we mean the use and abuse of the punishment of death, is intimately connected with the inquiry—what is to be done with the criminals whom it is our wish to save from execution?

The objects to be accomplished in the management of criminals are *two*: First, to render them unable to do mischief: Second, to give them motives to do good.

We can do nothing, we think, more calculated to convey light on this subject than to lay before our readers a short account of the ingenious species of building invented by Mr. Bentham for this purpose.

Let the reader conceive, in the first place, a circular building not covering all the space which it surrounds, but leaving a circular area vacant in the middle; that the width of the building thus extending circularly is sufficient for cells or chambers for the criminals; that there are two stories of cells one above another; these cells are open to the inside, having an iron grating instead of a wall. It is evident that an eye placed in the centrical area will command every part of the building, and place the prisoners under perpetual inspection.

Conceive another circular building to rise like a tube in the very centre of the inclosed area, having a space all around it. This is the inspector's lodge, which, being furnished with windows on every side, affords the means of looking directly into every cell.

The same cell is to serve for all purposes, *work, sleep, punishment and devotion.*

In this abstract many important particulars will be omitted, which relate to the construction of the building, the form of the yard and the means of securing the prisoners, to give place to Mr. Bentham's proposition. Having matured his plan he offered to take on himself the whole expense of the building, fitting up and stocking, and to provide for the convicts at 25

per cent. less than it then cost the government—upon the terms of his receiving the produce of their labour. He offered to come under the following engagements:—

1. To furnish the prisoners with a constant supply of wholesome food, not limited in quantity, but adequate to each man's desire.
2. To keep them clad in a state of tightness and neatness, superior to what is usual in the improved prisons.
3. To keep them supplied with separate beds and bedding—in a state of cleanness.
4. To insure to them a sufficient supply of artificial warmth and light, whenever the season renders it necessary.
5. To keep from them every kind of strong or spirituous liquor; except when ordered in the way of medicine.
6. To maintain them in a state of inviolable, though mitigated seclusion, in *assorted* companies, without any of those opportunities of promiscuous association, which disturb, if not destroy, whatever good effect can have been expected from occasional solitude.
7. To give them an interest in their work, by allowing them a share in the produce.
8. To convert the prison into a school, and by an extended application of the principle of the Sunday schools, to return its inhabitants into the world instructed, at least as well as in ordinary schools, in the most useful branches of vulgar learning, as well as in some trade or occupation, whereby they may afterwards obtain a livelihood.

9. To pay a penal sum for every *escape*, with or without any default of his, irresistible violence from without excepted ; and this without employing *irons*, on any occasion, or in any shape.

10. To provide them with *spiritual* and *medical* assistants, constantly living in the midst of them and incessantly keeping them in view.

11. To lay for them a foundation stone of a provision for old age, upon the plan of the Annuity Societies.

12. To insure to them a livelihood, at the expiration of their terms, by setting up a subsidiary establishment, into which all such as thought proper, should be admitted, and in which they would be continued in the exercise of the trades in which they were employed during their confinement, without any further expense to government.

13. To make himself personally responsible for the reformatory efficacy of his management, and even make amends, in most instances, for any accident of his failure, by paying a sum of money for every prisoner convicted of felony after his discharge, at a rate increasing according to the number of years

he had been under the proposer's care, viz. a sum not exceeding ten pounds if the prisoner had been in the penitentiary one year—fifteen if two years—twenty if three years—twenty-five if four years, and not exceeding thirty pounds, if five years or upwards.

Some articles of less moment are omitted. Mr. Bentham, speaking of himself as the proposer of the plan and the contract, says :—

"The station of *gaoler* is not in common account a very elevated one : the addition of that of *contractor* has not much tendency to raise it. He little dreamt, when he first launched into the subject, that he was to become a suitor, and perhaps an unsuccessful one, for such an office : But inventions unpractised might be in want of the inventor ; and a situation thus clipped of emoluments, while it was loaded with obligations, might be in want of candidates. Penetrated therefore with the importance of the end, he would not suffer himself to see anything unpleasant or discreditable in the means."

An "Act of Parliament was passed to carry the scheme into execution."

SARCASMS OF A CATHOLIC WRITER ON DISTRIBUTING
THE BIBLE.

"OUR Legislature certainly acted with great wisdom and prudence, when they passed a law to erect such spacious Lunatic Asylums, as we now see raised in every county in the kingdom. At one time, I

thought it would be incurring a needless expense ; but if the biblical frenzy goes on, we may soon expect to see these buildings completely occupied. These gentlemen come forward and announce their intention of

establishing CATHOLIC schools, the fundamental plan of which is to EXCLUDE every book which tends to convey any idea of the Catholic faith. For as to the Bible, it is very well known, that by reading in that alone, the Catholic can no more be instructed in the articles of his faith, than the believer in the Established Church can in the Thirty-nine Articles of his religion.

"The Bible-men must excuse us, if we do not believe either that the *Bible is the sole rule of faith*, or that there is *any necessity* for its being distributed; for that can be no common rule of faith which admits of a variety of interpretations: nor can there be any necessity for distributing the Bibles in order to make men acquainted with the Christian religion; since we shall in vain look for it among the means which its Divine Author provided as sufficient for the establishment and propagation of his system.

"In forming a society for distributing Bibles, the Church of England has signed its death-warrant, unless at the same time that it puts the Bible into the hands of self-interpreting readers, it will furnish each of them with a pair of Church-of-England spectacles, to enable him to see clearly the Thirty-nine Articles in the sacred volume. I might add, that if each one is to teach himself the doctrines of Christianity, ministers of religion will soon become an almost useless branch of society. I would therefore suggest to the Bible-men, in order to render their work complete, to give the book, when they distribute

it, a new title, viz. *Every man his own Parson.*

"The Catholic pastors can instruct and do instruct their people, at the present day, in the manner they have instructed them in all days since those of Christ, much better than these lay Evangelists can teach them with the help of Bibles, though they stereotyped all the linen in Ireland into Bibles; and the labouring poor of Ireland, without a single Bible in a village, know more of the revealed truths of the gospel, and can give a more rational, as well as a more detailed account of them, than the same class of people can in this country, which the *Bibliomanists* boastingly call THE LAND OF BIBLES.

"We, of the old school, shall continue to think as the whole body of Christians thought for 1500 years, and as nine out of ten in that body still think, that as Christianity was first taught and established before that part of the Bible which contains the distinguishing doctrines of its Divine Founder was even written, so it might have been propagated and continued to the end of the world, had the Bible never even made its appearance among Christians."

These extraordinary paragraphs are published in a work called the "Orthodox Journal, or Catholic Intelligeneer," and copied into the Evangelical Magazine, with the title "Bibliophobia," to retort the Catholic use of the word "Bibliomania," as applied to the zeal of Bible Societies. But whether such retorts of reproachful terms are not "rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing," is a ques-

tion which Christians should seriously consider.

It is remarkable that this Catholic writer should so readily admit that the "Articles of his faith"—or "the Catholic faith," are not to be obtained from the Bible. But so far as Catholics are blinded by the prejudices of their education they are objects of pity and not of contempt. How far Protestants are blinded by a similar

influence should be to them a matter of humble inquiry; and if they have been *made to differ*, by being more highly favoured, they should remember that *they have nothing but what they have received*. As this consideration excludes all ground for "boasting," it should also exclude all feelings of contempt towards brethren who have not enjoyed equal advantages.

CHILDREN CATECHETICALLY TAUGHT TO SIN.

Judge not that ye be not judged.

As a perfect contrast to this precept of our Saviour, I shall bring to view a precept of Mr. Thomas Vincent, contained in his "Explicatory Catechism, or Explanation of the Assembly's Shorter Catechism:"—

"Question. What should we judge of them that deny that there are three distinct persons in one Godhead?

"Answer. 1. We should judge them to be *blasphemers*, because they speak against the ever glorious God, who hath set forth himself in this distinction in the scriptures. 2. To be *damnable heretics*: this doctrine of the distinction of persons in the unity of essence being a *fundamental truth* denied by Sabellians, Arians, Photinians, and of late by Socinians, who were against the Godhead of Christ the Son and the Holy Ghost: among whom the Quakers are to be numbered, who deny this distinction."

It may be doubted whether there is any doctrine by which

one denomination of Christians has been distinguished from another, which is so dangerous to the souls of men, as this *practical* doctrine taught by Mr. Vincent.

As the Pastoral Letter of the Synod of Philadelphia involved in censure, not only several whole sects of Christians, but many persons who belong to their own denomination; so the censure of Mr. Vincent involves not only all avowed Anti-Trinitarians, but probably the greater part of professed Trinitarians. For all the various classes of modal Trinitarians have been as far from believing that God is really three distinct persons, as was Sabellius, Arius, Socinus, or George Fox.

This mode of teaching children to violate one of the plainest precepts of the Messiah, will account for the bitter enmities which have existed between different denominations of Christians—for the vile and abusive language with which sermons and various publications have been disgraced—for the odious

opinions which have been entertained of all who have dissent from a *barbarous phraseology*, which has been preferred to the simple language of the gospel—for the perils with which free inquiry has been accompanied—for the slow progress of light and truth, and for the various modes of persecution.

By this one passage in Mr. Vineent's Catechism, probably thousands, and tens of thousands have been taught and influenced to regard the whole of five sects of Christians as “*blasphemers*” and “*damnable heretics*.” Yet of these five sects, whom children have been thus taught to judge, abhor and calumniate, there have probably been thousands and tens of thousands who will be acknowledged by the Saviour as his humble followers.

The reader of the Christian Disciple will remember the character of Richard Reynolds, which was given in the last No. from the Christian Observer. Let him then consider how pernicious must be the consequences of teaching children to despise and calumniate such men. At

whose hands will the blood of these children be required, should they be ruined by such instructions! I shudder when I reflect on the fact that such instructions have ever been popular in our country, or in any other.

Can it be wonderful that people who have been thus taught from their cradles, should be unable to see evidences of piety and goodness in persons of any denomination, which they have been accustomed to abhor? Or that they should be able to prove, to their own satisfaction, that men of their own party are much better than other people? Or that they should mistake a burning and malignant zeal against their opponents, for the fervour of that *love which worketh no ill to its neighbour*?

If it were my aim to ruin children—to lead them into a course of self deception, and to render them a curse to community, I hardly know what method would be better adapted to accomplish the purpose, than to infuse into their minds such sentiments and such prejudices against Christians of every denomination but their own.

FAMILIAR CONSIDERATIONS, ADDRESSED TO PARENTS, ON THE DUTY OF REQUIRING THEIR CHILDREN TO STUDY THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

THE importance of forming an acquaintance with the Sacred Volume, will not, I think, at the present day be called in question by any who believe, that it was given by *inspiration of God*, and that its contents are *profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction,*

Far the Christian Disciple.

reception, and for instruction in righteousness, fitted to make men perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. And to those who admit, that youth is the season for acquiring knowledge and for forming the character, it cannot be necessary to

prove that the Bible should be put into the hands of children at a very early age.

But although these truths are obvious and commonly admitted in speculation, every one who has formed the slightest acquaintance with the character of the present age, must be convinced, that this branch of a Christian education is very generally neglected, not only in our schools, but in private families, and by those too who profess to be Christians, and from whom better things might be expected.

It is my design in the following pages to examine the reasons, which are most commonly given for this neglect; and I hope I shall be able to show, that they do not form a sufficient apology.

Why is it then that so many Christian parents, who in other respects honour their profession, neglect so plain, so important a duty as that of instructing their children in the knowledge of the Scriptures?

If we mistake not, they do it on some such pretence as the following:

1. They have no leisure to be devoted to the subject, and are constrained, however unwillingly, to leave their children to the care of others—they provide for them the means of education, and persuade themselves, that nothing more is required at their hands. They send them to school; but do not encourage them in their studies by their counsels and assistance, or by discovering any interest in their improvement: and for this neglect they plead the want of time.

We have no doubt that this

passes for a sufficient apology with many, who yet cannot plead any uncommon pressure of business; who can find leisure for attending to less important duties; who find time to spend in places of public resort, or in social visits at the houses of their friends; who are blessed with health and a competency, and have no occasion to make any extraordinary exertions to procure the necessaries and conveniences of life. We cannot believe then, that they are in earnest when they allege the want of time—the hurry of business—the press of worldly cares, as an apology for this neglect. Were there *first a willing mind* we are confident that opportunities would easily be found. At least we should suppose, that, on one day in the week, they might throw off the shackles and be free to give their attention to the moral and religious instruction of their children. Should they go about it in earnest they would find, that the expense of time and labour would be much less than they had anticipated; and they would be surprised to learn how much could be accomplished, and in how short a time.

2. Others perhaps excuse their neglect, by maintaining the false and dangerous position, that the study of the Scriptures may be omitted with safety, till their children shall arrive at the years of discretion and shall be able to understand their meaning and to appreciate their worth. They think it sufficient, till that period arrives, to furnish them with books of amusement; or, at least, to provide for their instruction in the vari-

ous branches of human learning. The Bible is regarded as a book above their years; and the study of it is consequently postponed to a later period of life.

To all such we can only say, that they discover a lamentable ignorance of the nature of habit, and act in direct opposition to that maxim of Scripture and common sense : *Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.*

But consult the voice of experience : that cannot lie. Do you find it easier in fact to begin at the age of fifteen than of five ? Is the mind better disposed to receive and to relish and to digest the truths of revelation, after it has first become habituated to more earthly food ? Are your children more under your control ; are they more humble, more docile, more ingenuous and undissembling, when approaching the borders of manhood, than while they were in childhood and youth ? After you have neglected their earliest years, can you summon resolution even to attempt their religious instruction ? Are you not ready to despair of success, and to complain that they are grown stubborn, and self-willed, and quite out of the reach of parental influence ? What says experience ? Let her be consulted, and we venture to predict, that she will give no countenance to the opinion, that the season of youth may be suffered to pass without planting the seeds of religious instruction.

3. There is another excuse more plausible than either of those before mentioned, which we propose to consider some-

what at large. You plead the difficulty of the task of teaching, where there is no inclination to learn. You put the Bible into the hands of the young ; but you cannot prevail upon them to study, what is to them so dull and uninteresting. You find that they are better pleased with books of entertainment, and that trifling childish stories are more adapted to their infant understandings and volatile spirits. Hence you too hastily conclude, that there is some unconquerable aversion in the youthful mind to sacred literature, and although it gives you pain to see your children unacquainted with the sacred volume, you deem it impracticable to inspire them with a love of it, and leave them to gather from conjecture, or conversation, or an occasional attendance on public worship, all the knowledge they will ever possess of the doctrines and duties of the Christian religion. How imperfect this knowledge must be it is not difficult to conjecture. What can they learn from conversation, in which religion has so small a share ? or from the religious discourses, which they sometimes are permitted to hear ; but which you take so little pains to impress upon their minds ? You must be convinced, that they will grow up in a most deplorable ignorance of what it most concerns them to know ; an ignorance of themselves and of God, of their duty and high destination. You must be convinced too, that something ought to be done to remedy the evil complained of ; an evil, which, from some cause or other, has vastly increased

since the days of our fathers ; and which, if not checked soon, threatens to render the Scriptures a useless collection of writings, which none but the learned few can understand. Yes, in this enlightened age, and when copies of the Bible are found in all our families, in a language which we can all understand, it is an undoubted fact, that the present generation falls very far short of those which have preceded it in the accuracy and extent of their knowledge of the revealed will of God. The days have gone by when the reading of a portion of Scripture was a stated exercise at morning and night ; when the Bible was not only talked about, but read and studied ; when it was thought to be an essential part of a Christian education to make the young familiar with its heavenly contents ; and when out of the mouths of babes and sucklings praise ascended to the throne of God.

We shall not be understood to undervalue the improvements of modern systems of education. Neither are we blind to the faults of our fathers. They had their defects ; and we have ours. But we are constrained to admire, and we ought to emulate, their habitual, persevering efforts to make themselves familiar with the word of God, and to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. We may accuse them of being righteous overmuch ; we may declaim against their bigotry and intolerance ; and may pride ourselves on the liberality and refinement and learning of the age in which we

live ; but we ought to blush with shame, when we reflect on their vast superiority over us in that knowledge which confessedly is the most important of all—the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures.

We say then that something ought to be done to wipe away the reproach, which fastens itself upon so many Christians of the present age—the reproach of leaving religion almost out of sight in the education of the young—the reproach of suffering them to grow up in an almost total ignorance of a book, which is confessedly divine ; which they believe to be a perfect standard of truth and duty, and a sure guide to a glorious immortality. And I am persuaded that something may be done, if only the attention of parents and preceptors can be called to the subject. For, although there may be in the human heart a natural repugnance to spiritual things ; and although the young more especially are exposed to numerous temptations to think light of religion ; I am fully convinced, that, if the proper methods were adopted, the study of the Bible might be rendered as interesting as that of almost any other book. It is the opinion of all fair and judicious critics, that, even if we overlook its claims as the word of God, no other book whatever contains such admirable specimens of excellence in almost every species of composition ; that the historical parts are written in a style of the most captivating simplicity ; that never bard sang more divinely, than the sweet songster of Israel ; that nothing in all

the writings of the ancients can be compared for true sublimity to the hallowed strains of Isaiah or of the exile of Patmos ; and that the parables of our Saviour are some of the finest specimens of moral painting, which the world ever saw.

And can it be pretended with any degree of plausibility, that no means can be devised for rendering such a book interesting to the young ?

Rather let us suppose, what

is far more likely to be true, that, where a reluctance to read the Scriptures is discovered, it arises principally from some fault in the mode of instruction, and not from any want of interest in the book itself, or from any unnatural aversion in the pupil to the delightful lessons it contains.

[Something more relating to this subject may be expected in a future number.]

CAPITAL PUNISHMENTS.

For the Christian Disciple.

THE public attention seems lately to have been turned to the question of the right of society to inflict capital punishment. This question was much agitated in Europe in the latter part of the last century. The Marquis *Beccaria*, in his elegant treatise on crimes and punishments, and *Voltaire*, in an essay on the same subject, discussed it with much ingenuity ; and urged the policy, and developed the numerous advantages of its abolition. How honourable would it be to America, if this great desideratum could be effected in this country.

H. Calkoens, an eminent lawyer in Amsterdam, and the celebrated *Michaelis*, maintained the lawfulness and utility of capital punishments : the former in an elaborate work on the means to prevent and punish crimes, inserted in the 4th volume of the memoirs of the *Soc. Florent. Liberales Artes* : and the other in a preface to the last volume of his commentary upon the Mosaic Laws, publish-

ed at *Gottingen*, in April. 1775. These writers were followed and their position supported by *Filanger*, in *La Scienza della Legislatione*, Tom. iii. part 2, chap. 29. Although these writers endeavoured to weaken and refute *Beccaria's* arguments by subtle distinctions ; and it must be confessed that, in some respects he has taken untenable ground ; yet, upon the whole, the chief force of his reasoning remains in its full strength.

None of *Beccaria's* antagonists consider general usage a sufficient justification of this power : nor do they appeal for support to the Law as promulgated Gen. ix. 6. considering that this declaration is not to be extended beyond the limited period for which it was given. But they nevertheless insist upon the lawfulness and usefulness of this stretch of power in some cases.

To meet these apologists upon their own ground, I do not hesitate to say, that men did not, nor can it ever be pre-

sumed that they did, surrender to society the right to punish any crime against the community with death. The fallacy of the reasoning then, because man in a state of nature has a right to defend himself and his property, even at the expense of the life of an unjust aggressor, therefore he may transfer to the society over his own life,—is too glaring to deserve a serious discussion. Nor do I perceive that there is more solidity in the argument, that because I may divest myself of a part of my natural liberty, with a view the better to secure the more essential parts, in favour of the society at large, and may clothe it with a power of compelling me by corporal punishments to submit to its laws, therefore I can dispose of my life also; and the society may consequently take it; whereas in no case was such a power originally vested in individuals.

Self defence is the basis, on which any one may repel an unjust aggressor, even with the loss of his life, in a state of nature. But this power does not originate in any abstract right, mutually given or assumed; much less inherent in the nature of man. Neither is the act justifiable after the aggressor is disarmed, or disabled from doing further injury. I acknowledge that a premature death may sometimes be the consequence of corporal punishment or severe imprisonment: but this acceleration is no necessary consequence of the infliction. It would not therefore be in the contemplation of individuals, when agreeing to enter into the

social compact for their mutual benefit.

It is a mere arbitrary assumption that because, when moderate punishments prove insufficient for the well being of society, more severe ones may be employed in order to obtain the chief object of the association;—therefore, when nothing else will answer the purpose, a final recourse to capital punishments is unavoidable. In the same manner, the torture, the wheel, and other cruel punishments may claim adoption. But this precarious assertion is also built upon the assumption, that such a right could be and actually was vested in the society at large: while it assumes as proved, that capital punishments have a greater efficacy in the prevention of crimes, than any other corporal punishment, or even imprisonment.

This will appear in a still clearer light, if the chief arguments in favour of capital punishments are impartially considered.

4. The certainty of death, and the immediate presence of its horrors.

Daily experience shews that this impression is generally very weak. It is but the pain of an instant, passing off, as in hanging, in the twinkling of an eye. Unprincipled and hardened offenders, without respect for themselves or affection for their friends, are not softened by its certainty: while more unhappy individuals, who by the excitement of a sudden provocation, or a temptation too violent to be withstood, have committed a crime, are benumbed by a lurk-

ing hope of reprieve or pardon. Compare this with the impression of an inevitable certainty of a severe corporal punishment or perpetual imprisonment, without the hope of pardon ; and believe, if you can, that capital punishments would have a happier effect on the public morals. Although I would not absolutely shut the door against pardon in every case, I would wish the prerogative to be exceedingly limited. It should, in each instance, be sanctioned by the highest judicial tribunal : nor should it ever be granted on light or frivolous grounds.

Will it be said that a sense of the shame and disgrace of a public execution and an infamous death, makes a deeper impression on the mind, than perpetual confinement can produce ? Is the culprit under the sentence of the law, anxious for his character after death ? Is he distressed at the sufferings of his relatives and acquaintance ?

It will hardly be urged in favour of capital punishments, that the culprit may be brought into a salvable state, by the ministrations of a priest, during the few hours previous to his death. Whereas he might, in a solitary cell, be humbled by remorse, arrive in time to serious and improving reflections ; he might repair and atone for his wrongs, by listening to wholesome advice, by correcting his erroneous views, cultivating his intellectual faculties, and subduing and controlling his irregular passions. But it is feared that he may commit new crimes —certainly not during his confinement. If this be temporary,

and he returns to the paths of vice, let the next imprisonment be for his life. Is it not a mischief to the community, and an act of cruelty, to prevent a crime by inflicting death ?

2. The public benefit is not promoted, nor is satisfaction procured to the injured party, by the death of the malefactor. What satisfaction, or what redress, can the murderer give ?

The first object of a wise legislator, is to secure the infractor of the laws, and to prevent him from perpetrating further crimes. It is true, this is effectually done by the death of the culprit : but it may be done as effectually by a rigorous confinement. In this manner too, satisfaction to the injured party is rendered in some degree attainable. In the other mode it is made impossible. Further, the death of the malefactor may often cause a new mischief to the community, and even sometimes to those whom he had offended. It may be the loss of an excellent mechanie, or a man of great learning and knowledge, who if secured might remain in some respects useful to the public, to the offended individuals, and perhaps to his own destitute family.

I know it is pretended that the chief object of punishment, that of deterring others from crime, is obtained by the infliction of capital punishments. But who sees not that this is a fruitless attempt ? What impressions are usually excited in the minds of the crowd assembled at a public execution ? horror of the deed ?—a firm resolve not to tread in the same steps ? No ; it is compassion, and if

eruelt be a part of the infliction, it is compassion for the sufferer, mingled with horror at the law, or those whose duty it is to administer it.

Another baneful consequence of capital punishments often exhibited, is, that the people become familiar with them:—while confinement remains a perpetual and dreadful beacon. The important point is, that no crime remain unpunished, and that no prospect of a pardon easily obtainable, take from punishment its influence, and harden the offender: and it is a matter of experience, that in

the proportion that punishments are more severe, and more frequently inflicted, crimes are usually more common. Look at France for one example, while among the Arabs in Muscat, where theft and homicide are punished by imprisonment, those crimes are said to be less known than in any other country upon the globe.*

*This article is supposed to have been written by a foreigner, who has for some years been a resident in a neighbouring state, and who is venerable both for age and learning. We hope his reflections will be duly considered.

SPRING.

So many expectations are answered, so many hopes excited, so much life revived, and so much beauty and pleasure manifested at the return of Spring, that it cannot be ungrateful to any one to have his contemplations directed to this charming season of the year.

The first sentiment excited by the return of Spring is the faithfulness of God. When after the apparent death of nature, when all has been long chilled and frost bound, and the impatient husbandman begins to look for the first motions of returning warmth and life, how delightful is the sentiment excited by the first indications of awakening nature. God then has not forgotten us! He remembers his ancient promise, that "while the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter shall not cease."—This sentiment of satisfaction which is most sensibly felt when the Spring has

been long delayed, is in some degree impaired by the constant regularity which we have long witnessed. How pleasing must it be to every reflecting mind to find this admirable order preserved, and our dependence upon it re-assured!

Besides the faithfulness and providence of the Supreme Author of nature, the return of Spring seems to exhibit him in all the fulness of his beneficence and the inexhaustible variety of his love to his creation. What an universal movement of gladness and expectation commences with this season! What an overflow of animation and joy! What a generous exhilaration takes place throughout nature, when God reneweth the face of the earth! The frosts, melted by the breath of Spring, let go their long imprisoned waters. The soil yields and moves under the mellowing influences of the sun. The teeming earth pours forth her innumerable varieties

of life. Then every living creature becomes conscious of a more animated existence; organized beings of every description exhibit indications of a superior life; and animate nature seems to be approaching to the limits of vitality. The fields and forests exhale a breathing fragrance, and show an increasing pomp of vegetation. The meads invite the flocks and herds to luxuriate in their soft and generous abundance. The peopled air too is in motion. The time of the singing of birds is come. All the hearts of the various tribes of animals seem touched with exultation, impatient to show forth the pleasure which they feel, and to call on man to rejoice with them, and praise him who satisfieth the desire of every living thing. Every thing in this delightful season of the year, calls on man to unbind his heart from the chains of selfish passions, and to loosen the sweet influence of his benevolent affections. Every thing calls on him to come forth, and enjoy the bliss of the reviving world. Every thing invites him to give up his heart to God, the boundless spirit, the unremitting energy; and share with him, whose name is love, the joy of beholding his creation happy.

In this season of the year how refreshing is it to the debilitated and confined to taste the sweetness of the air! Now the sick whose heart is not a stranger to the love of God, sees a promise of his future care in every bud that opens, and hears a whisper of his mercy in every breeze that reaches his almost languishing senses. Every thing tells him that God still

animates and blesses his creation. Every thing reminds him that "he giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength." Before we turn to another topic, let us stop and observe the goodness which is manifested in the gradual opening of the year. Here nothing is abrupt, nothing unexpected. The days gradually lengthen. The sun mounts every day a little higher. The air becomes more tepid. The field gradually acquires its soft green hue. The various labours of the season succeed in easy and appropriate order. And every thing seems accommodated to the convenience of man. What comfort, what health, what protracted and ever renewing pleasure is thus provided! If the sun were to pour at once on us his midsummer flood of light and heat after the cold of winter, we should faint and sicken under his overwhelming warmth. The productions of the earth would vegetate and fade in the same season. Now, man has time to accommodate himself to the expected changes of the year, and to adapt alike his labours and his hopes to the growth and progress of vegetation.

Again. Who can go out and observe the tender herb, just shooting, and the timid blossom opening itself to the yet doubtful gales, and not feel the dependence of all nature upon the great controller of the year?

All yet is promise; all yet is expectation: but who can reflect, without awe and reverence profound, that before tomorrow's sun arises this exuberance of life may be checked,

and a chilling frost have converted the laughing face of nature into a dull and wrinkled sadness ; and the proprietor of many a vast domain have looked as dead and joyless as his fields. When we think how much is suspended on a slight variation of the temperature of the air, a variation imperceptible perhaps to the nicest senses ; how much hope may be blasted, how much beauty faded, how much want and distress occasioned, by the interrupted warmth of the Spring—can we avoid feeling the inefficacy, the vanity of man ! Who does not feel the justice of the rebuke of God to Job, and forcibly apply it to the insensible proprietor of the products of the earth—“ Canst thou bind the sweet influences of the Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion ?” Give God, then, who alone can do it, and protect and prosper the products of the year, thy reverence, thy confidence, thy prayers, and thy thanksgivings. If thou couldst send forth thy spirit and renew the desolated earth and revive the withered Spring, thou mightest venture to forget the Almighty ; but independent of him thou hast no power, and if he withhold his rain and his dew, or send his blighting frost or mildew, thy strength and wisdom, thy industry and labour are all in vain.

These thoughts suggest another common reflection, the resemblance between the Spring of the year and the youth of human life. How many topics of compassion does this single idea suggest ! The tenderness, the delicacy, the danger of the season in both ; the necessity of

early attention, of assiduous cultivation, of careful direction, of support and pruning, of repressing luxuriance, and of guarding the young fruit from exposure and plunder ; and afterwards, the ample reward which the cultivator receives in the maturity of his tender charge.

There is one view of the subject, however, in which we are all concerned. The progress of the Spring indicates to the reflecting mind that the will of God is that every thing should advance to perfection. All nature seems now to be in progress. Every day gives birth to some new leaf, or flower, or fruit. The plants shoot upwards towards the sun. The trees add to their last year’s strength and verdure. The animals grow and multiply. And the earth, fertilized, watered, and quickened, is prepared to pour forth her autumnal treasures and crown the year with plenty.

Does not this shame the sloth and inactivity of man ; man who has an eternal year before him, and everlasting progress offered to his ambition ! See the plants aspiring towards that luminary which warms and quickens them ! O let us open our hearts to that intellectual light of the world, the Sun of righteousness, and aspire towards heaven ! Let us rise every day higher from the earth ; and bear in rich abundance the fruits of righteousness which are to the praise and glory of God. Finally, Christians, can you look out upon nature thus resuscitated and reanimated, and not feel a secret intimation of the most sublime and soothing of human hopes, the idea of immortality ? Is it

fanciful, or presumptuous, or unphilosophical, to see in reviving nature a type and emblem of the reanimation of the millions of human creatures that have been committed to the grave? However the cool and sterile reason of the philosopher may deride this analogy, it will force itself on the mind of every man that has heard of Jesus Christ's revelation, that wise interpreter and expositor of nature and of providence. Surely, when we find an Apostle venturing on this similitude, and describing the change of this corruptible into incorruptible, speaking of the death of man like the apparent death of the seed, and declaring of his body that though sown in weakness it shall be raised in power, though sown a natural body it shall be raised a spiritual body in that glorious regeneration when mortality shall be swallowed up of life,—it is no longer imagination, it is truth, it is reason, it is duty, to discern in the revival of the year the approach of that universal Spring of human existence, when all that now seems lost shall come forth in renovated beauty and celestial vigour.

Is it then forbidden to take the pensive and outcast mourner abroad, and bid him mark the transformation of which nature is full? To bid him observe the awakening activity of the torpid

animals, the evolution of innumerable insects, the upshooting of ten thousand plants, the germination of millions of seeds long since dropped corrupted and forgotten; and then to ask him, if that genial power which recovers nature from such an universal death, left man only to perish unrevived—man only to remain in the everlasting winter of annihilation?—He cannot believe it. Every flower that opens, every blade that germinates, every insect that flutters, every mite pregnant with life that floats upon the air, inspires him with another hope. “It is not the will of my Father who is in heaven (said the first born from the dead)—It is not the will of my Father that one of these little ones should perish.”

Let the Spring of hope bloom in the heart of the afflicted; and let all creatures capable of feeling the inspiration of this season, capable of discerning the indications of intelligence and goodness in the return of this genial season, join the general song of praise to Him who wakes all the life, and upholds all the spirits, and warms all the breasts, and lights all the minds, and inspires all the hopes which are found throughout his creation; praise, “Him first, him last; him midst, and without end!”

B.

NEAL'S HISTORY OF THE PURITANS.

MR. Charles Ewer and William B. Allen and Company are reprinting, at a great expense, “The History of the Puritans, or Protestant Non-conformists,

from the death of Queen Elizabeth to the beginning of the civil war in the year 1642: with an account of their principles; their attempts for a further re-

formation in the church ; their sufferings ; and the lives and characters of their principal divines. In five volumes. By DANIEL NEAL, M. A. A new edition, revised, corrected and enlarged, by JOSHUA TOULMIN, D. D. To which are prefixed, some Memoirs of the life and writings of the Author."

Two volumes of this American edition have already been published, and it is hoped that the publishers will be encouraged by a liberal subscription for the work. In some future Numbers of the Christian Disciple a more particular account of the History than can now be given, may be expected. At this time we shall make but a few observations.

Mr. Neal, the compiler of the History, was an eminent dissenting minister, cotemporary with Watts and Doddridge. Perfect impartiality is not perhaps to be expected of any historian in writing the history of his own denomination—especially if it embraces a series of severe trials, suffering and persecutions on account of religious opinions. To good men, on opposite sides of a controversy, the same facts and occurrences are often viewed in a very different light. This is a circumstance which, probably, is seldom duly considered either in writing or reading. It is not to be supposed that Mr. Neal was free from prepossession ; still it is believed that he wrote

with *integrity of heart*, and that it was his *aim to be faithful in his narrations, and impartial in his statements.*

To the people of New-England the "History of the Puritans" must be very interesting, as it unfolds that melancholy state of things in England which occasioned our forefathers to leave their native land, to expose themselves first to the perils of the ocean, and then to the perils of a wilderness, inhabited by beasts of prey and savage men. This History must also be interesting to those who wish to be informed respecting the first efforts for a reformation from popery in the land of their ancestors—the intolerant principles which prevailed in that country in former ages, and the rise and progress of religious and civil liberty. Perhaps no person of intelligence can read the History of the Puritans without being astonished at the general blindness which formerly prevailed among every denomination of Christians, in respect to the rights of conscience, and the means which were adopted to support opinions, and to promote religion ;—and if he be pious, as well as intelligent, it is hardly possible that he should fail of being deeply affected with the mercy of God to the people of this country, in regard to the extent in which civil and religious liberty is now enjoyed by the several denominations.

A GOOD STORY.

"**THERE is,**" says Erasmus," a trite little story that exhibits an example in private life,

which it might not be amiss to follow when the state is in danger of involving itself in a war.

There were two near relations who could not agree on the division of some property which devolved to them. Counsel were retained, the process commenced, and the whole affair was in the hands of lawyers. The cause was just on the point of being brought on—war was declared. At this period one of the parties sent for his opponent and addressed him to the following purpose :—

' In the first place, it is certainly unbecoming, to speak in the most tender terms of it, that two persons united like us by nature, should be dissevered by interest. In the second place, the event of a lawsuit is no less uncertain than the event of war. To engage in it, indeed, is in our power : to put an end to it, is not so. Now the whole matter in dispute is 100 pieces of gold. Twice that sum must be expended on notaries, on attorneys, on counsellors, on the judges and their friends, if we go to law about it. We must court, flatter and see them ; not to mention the trouble of darning attendance and paying our most obsequious respects to them. In a word, there is more cost than worship in the business, more harm than good ; and therefore I hope this consideration will weigh with you to give up all thoughts of a lawsuit. Let us be wise for ourselves, rather than these plun-

derers ; and the money that would be ill-bestowed on them, let us divide between ourselves. Do you give me one moiety from your share, and I will give you the same from mine. Thus we shall be clear gainers in point of love and friendship, which we should otherwise lose ; and we shall escape all the trouble. But if you do not choose to yield any thing to me, why then I cheerfully resign the *whole* to you, and you shall do just as you please with it—I would rather the money should be in the hands of a friend, than in the clutches of these insatiable robbers. I shall have made profit enough by the bargain, if I shall have saved my character, kept my friend, and avoided the plague of a lawsuit '

" The justice of these remarks, and the good humour with which they were made, overcame the adversary. They therefore settled the matter between themselves, and left the poor lawyers in a rage.

" In the infinitely more hazardous concerns of war, let statesmen condescend to imitate this instance of discretion.—Who but a madman would angle for a vile fish with a hook of gold ? " *Antipolemus p. 78-81.*

If men would thus wisely count the cost beforehand, they would seldom go to law, and never make war.

A NOBLE MONUMENT.

In past ages the world has been in the habit of bestowing its highest praises on martial

From the Friend of Peace.
deeds, and the warrior has been regarded as the glory of the human race. But a revolution in

public opinion has commenced. Men begin to see that the **BENEFACORS** of mankind, have higher claims than *destroyers*.

Perhaps on no occasion has this change of opinion been more apparent than in the respect which has been shown to the memory of Richard Reynolds, of the society of Friends, who died at Cheltenham in England, Sept. 10, 1816. Like his Lord and Master he literally "went about doing good," relieving the wants and distresses of his fellow beings. When he fell, England felt the shock, and

people of all ranks and all denominations united to bewail the public loss, and to do honour to the memory of one who had long shone as a light in the world and as the **FRIEND OF GOD AND MAN.**

Many years prior to the decease of this good man, "On hearing of Lord Nelson's victory at Trafalgar, the late worthy John Birtill of Bristol, placed a marble tablet in a private chapel, in his dwelling house, bearing this inscription:—

**JOHN HOWARD,
JONAS HANWAY,
JOHN FOTHERGILL, M. D.
RICHARD REYNOLDS.**

"Not unto us, O Lord ! not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory."

Beneath some ample hallow'd dome,
The warrior's bones are laid,
And blazon'd on the stately tomb
His martial deeds display'd.

Beneath a humble roof we place
This monumental stone,
To names the poor shall ever bless,
And charity shall own :

To soften human woes their care,
To feel its sigh, to aid its prayer ;
Their work on earth, not to destroy,
And their reward—their Master's joy.

After the death of Richard Reynolds the people of Bristol, the city of his late residence, formed a charitable institution to perpetuate his memory, with the name of **REYNOLDS COMMEMORATION SOCIETY.** This institution is perhaps the noblest

MONUMENT which was ever raised to the memory of a man. In reference to this tribute of respect James Montgomery wrote the verses entitled **A GOOD MAN'S MONUMENT**; from which we select the following lines :—

When heroes fall triumphant on the plain ;
For millions conquered, and ten thousands slain,

For cities levell'd, kingdoms drench'd in blood—
Navies annihilated on the flood ;
The pageantry of public grief requires
The splendid homage of heroic lyres ;
And genius moulds impassion'd brass to breathe
The deathless spirit of the dust beneath,
Calls marble honour from its cavern'd bed,
And bids it live—the proxy of the dead.

Reynolds expires, a nobler chief than these ;
No blood of widows stains his obsequies ;
But widows' tears, in sad bereavement, fall,
And foundling voices on their father call.

Not in the fiery hurricane of strife,
'Midst slaughter'd legions, he resign'd his life ;
But peaceful as the twilight's parting ray
His spirit vanish'd from its house of clay,
And left on kindred souls such power imprest,
They seem'd with him to enter into rest.

Go build his monument :—and let it be
Firm as the land, but open as the sea.
Low in his grave the strong foundations lie,
Yet be the dome expansive as the sky,
On crystal pillars resting from above
Its sole supporters—*works of faith and love.*

One simple altar in the midst be plac'd
With this, and only this, inscription grae'd,
The song of angels at Immanuel's birth,
'Glory to God ! good will, and peace on earth.'

Let sentiments like these be diffused through the world,—let children be early and perseveringly taught to venerate such benevolent men as Richard Reynolds, and to regard with pity and horror the destroyers of

mankind ; then a new state of society will be introduced—the strongest motives to war will lose their fascinating power, and the custom will sink into general contempt and oblivion.

INTELLIGENCE.

NEW-YORK REPORT ON THE CONDITION OF THE POOR OF THAT CITY, AND THE CAUSES OF THEIR DISTRESS.

THE committee, appointed by the general meeting of the several ward committees in New-York, held at Harmony Hall, on the twenty-second of

February, to inquire into the present state of want and misery among the poor of this city, and to devise some plan to prevent, as far as possible, a

recurrence and increase of these evils :
Respectfully report in part :—

That the investigation, which has taken place during the late inclement season, and the inquiries necessarily made for regulating the supplies that have been afforded to the poor, have demonstrated, that the extreme sufferings owing to the want of provisions, fuel, and clothing, have at least equalled in degree, and in respect to numbers have far exceeded, any thing of the kind that has ever before occurred in this city.

If we recur to the state of the poor, from year to year, for ten years past, we find they have yearly increased greatly beyond the regular increase of population. At the present period there is reason to believe, from information received and from the visiting committee in the several wards, that fifteen thousand, men, women, and children, equal to one seventh of the whole population of our city, have been supported by public or private bounty and munificence !!

In viewing this deplorable state of human misery, the committee have diligently attended to an examination of the causes which have produced such dire effects. And after the most mature and deliberate reflection, they are satisfied that the most prominent and alarming cause, is the free and inordinate use of *spirituous liquors*. To this cause alone may fairly be attributed seven eighths of the misery and distress among the poor of the present winter ; one sixteenth to the want of employment, owing to the present distressed state of trade and commerce ; and the remaining portion to circumstances difficult to enumerate, and which possibly could not be avoided.

It is impossible to contemplate the subject referred to the committee without feeling its importance and the difficulties that must be encountered in any attempt to remove the evils stated. In every view it is plain to demonstration, that unless some effectual plan can be devised for lessening the use of ardent spirits, it will be in vain to expect that the number of poor will be lessened, or that their morals can be reformed.

There is no one thing that appears to the committee to require a more

prompt and effectual remedy than the evil resulting from the numerous licenses granted for retailing spirituous liquors. In December, 1809, as appears by a report of a committee of the Humane Society, the number of licenses granted in this city by the commissioner, amounted to eighteen hundred.—And by information obtained by the same committee from the mayor of Philadelphia, the number of licenses granted in that city, for keeping taverns, including beer-houses and shops to sell liquor by retail, was one hundred and ninety ; and that in the county of Philadelphia, (comprehending the suburbs of the city, several considerable towns, and villages, and a large tract of country,) there are two hundred and forty.—Your committee beg leave to reiterate the sentiments advanced in the report of the committee before mentioned, that the bare statement of these facts is sufficient to prove the existence of an evil at once disgraceful and injurious to this city ; and the more the subject is investigated, the more enormous and destructive does that evil appear. It causes or aggravates the misery and poverty of most of the labouring poor ; and thus yearly the number of applicants for public and private bounty, are increased. It fills the list of unfortunate debtors maintained by the Humane Society : it crowds the almshouse, the hospital, the state and the city-prisons. In little shops, situated generally throughout the city, these liquors are retailed, and every artifice is employed to entice the labourer and the poor man to squander in intoxication those earnings with which his family should be supported. Hence these petty taverns exhibit perpetual scenes of riot and disorder. Hence law-suits and criminal prosecutions. Hence, that day, which religion and the laws of our country has set apart for the worship of God, is openly profaned. In houses of this description liquor is constantly sold on that day in defiance of the law. Those enormities, so fatal to the health and morals, and frequently to the life of the individuals who commit them, and so contrary to law, both human and divine, cannot but be disgraceful, and undoubtedly will prove ruinous to the people among whom they are tolerated. This

fatal vice enervates the mind, sours the disposition, inflames the passions, produces insanity, renders the heart callous to the feelings of humanity, and leads to neglect of wife and children, who are often left to want the common necessities of life; and to this country it furnishes death with more victims than all other causes of premature mortality. Many of these considerations acquire additional force, when the form of our government and the political institutions of our country are taken into view: as the annals of history attest, that almost every free state of antiquity lost its liberty in consequence of the corruption of the poorer classes of its citizens; and scarce an instance can be found of a popular government which survived the morals and manners of the people. Surely, then every one who is interested in the preservation of the peace, the welfare, and the liberty of his country—every one who reflects on the spirit, the laws, and sanction of the holy religion which he professes, must be impressed with the necessity of the duty of endeavouring to arrest the progress of so destructive a vice, and to restrain the practice of unnecessarily granting licenses for the express purpose of furnishing to our fellow-citizens a poison so fatal and so baneful in its effects.

In order to exhibit the immense wants occasioned to the community by the practice which is the subject of our present research, a calculation has been made of the sum yearly squandered in this city by the baneful use of ardent spirits. The number of houses licensed for the purpose is computed to be eighteen hundred—Suppose that each of these retail to the amount of two dollars and fifty

cents a day (which will evidently appear to be a very moderate assumption,) the sales in this article will amount to 1,642,500 dollars per annum, worse than squandered in the course of the year. If this sum were laid out in flour, it would, at the rate of ten dollars per barrel, purchase 164,250 barrels; a quantity sufficient to supply the whole population of New-York with bread for the same space of time. If the sum of one dollar be added thereto, (which yet must be deemed moderate,) the sum would then be sufficient to purchase 300,000 loads of wood: a quantity sufficient to supply the whole city and county for that period. Thus it would appear that the money, which is idly thrown away in drams, would be sufficient to furnish, not only the poor, but the whole population of this city, both with bread and fuel throughout the year.

An additional lamentable circumstance which cannot be too forcibly impressed on the mind of every member of the community is, that the children of the poor are employed and constantly sent by their parents to these tippling houses for the purpose of procuring liquor. Thus the rising generation of the poor are initiated into the principles and the practice of immorality; they become habituated to profane cursing and swearing, and every species of vice is thus rendered familiar to their minds. A melancholy prospect is thus presented of what must be expected from the rising generation when they arrive at years of maturity, contaminated and polluted as they must be in their progress to manhood, by every kind of profligacy, which can render them not only useless, but pernicious members of society.

EXTRACTS FROM THE SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN SCHOOL SOCIETY.

FRANCE.

WITH a mingled feeling of satisfaction and regret, your committee must now direct your attention to France; the country from which such encouraging and promising information was communicated to the last two General Meetings.

The delight which has been experi-

enced by every friend of truth and religion—at the zeal and ardor with which the most enlightened and benevolent men of that country espoused the cause of Universal Education, and at the rapid progress which was made in the establishment of schools on the British system—must naturally be considerably diminished by the late de-

termination of the French Government to abandon the liberal principles on which they set out ; to shut the door of the new schools against children of all those parents who cannot conscientiously consent to have them educated under the direct influence of all the peculiar tenets and practices of the Roman Catholic Church.

Every additional inquiry which those really liberal men and philanthropists, who compose the "Society for Elementary Instruction" formed at Paris, have made, give new proofs of the neglected state of popular education in that country ; and set the great extent of the advantages likely to result from a general adoption of the British System, in a still clearer light.

From the Report of that Society, read at their General Meeting on the 19th of February last, it appears that two thirds of the children of age to attend schools, amounting at all times to upwards of two millions, are growing up in ignorance ; and, of the whole mass of the inhabitants of France, about sixteen millions are unable to read or write.

Your committee are, however, far from considering the progress which has been made towards spreading the British System in France as useless. They can still rejoice at having been the means of transplanting it ; being firmly persuaded that thereby benefits have been bestowed on France, which neither time nor circumstance will be able entirely to destroy. Masters have been trained and qualified, by Mr. Martin and his associates, for carrying on the great cause. In fact, the system has been exhibited to the view of the French nation ; and your Committee feel assured, that its simplicity, beauty, and economy, will appear so evident to the quick and lively perception of that people, that its ultimate success is infallible.

SWITZERLAND.

Your Committee have been informed by Dr. Marctet, that many enlightened individuals in Switzerland are at this moment engaged in promoting schools upon the British System.

Mr. Pictet, brother of the learned and amiable Professor of Geneva, has, by his truly patriotic and noble example, kindled a zeal, which your Com-

mittee trust will produce most gratifying results.

This gentleman was the Swiss Plenipotentiary at the late Congress ; and defended the interests of his country with such talents and success, that on his return, the Council of Geneva voted him a national present. This he declined to accept ; but requested that the intended sum might be applied as the commencement of a fund, which might be afterwards increased, for the purpose of establishing a National School on the model of the British Free Schools, the organization of which he offered to superintend. The Council of Geneva acceded to his plan ; and, thus seconded by the Government, and by all the persons of education and public spirit in that city, no doubt is entertained of his complete success.

ASIA.

On account of the loss of our invaluable Secretary, at the very time when he was about to arrange his materials for the Report, the information respecting the proceedings of the Society in foreign parts will be much more scanty than would otherwise have been the case.

Favourable accounts have been received from the European Settlements in Asia, where the British System has been applied ; and that highly respectable Society for Baptist Missions, which has so nobly exerted itself in aid of the views of the British and Foreign Bible Society in India, has engaged Mr. Penny, one of the Masters educated in the British System, to go out in one of the first ships to India, in order the more perfectly to establish this efficacious and economical plan, in the numerous Schools which the Baptist Missionary Society have erected in that country ; and to train Teachers for carrying their truly Christian and highly benevolent designs to the greatest possible extent, by the judicious regulations which they have adopted. While they avoid every thing which could hurt the feelings or shock the prejudices of the natives, they are now actually diffusing light and knowledge among those who have for ages sat in darkness, to an extent unexampled in the annals of civilization ; and are thereby preparing the minds of the heathen to understand

and receive the sublime truths of our holy religion.

HAYTI.

Your Committee cannot deny themselves the satisfaction of noticing the efforts which are now made to introduce and spread civilization, by the only method which can be successfully attempted—an improved and universal religious education in the new kingdom of Hayti.

The philanthropist watches, with a peculiar attention, and not without considerable anxiety, the steps by which we hope and trust the people of that interesting country are gradually emerging from the miseries of oppression and the horrors of destructive warfare; and what is better calculated to encourage these hopes than the observation, that the Chief of that nation seems to be convinced that the surest means of healing the wounds of long protracted warfare and sanguinary conflicts, of establishing and strengthening the social ties, and of introducing happiness, are to be found in the general diffusion of knowledge, and the dissemination of the scriptures?

The following passage is quoted from his public Proclamation in the Gazette of Hayti.

"History informs us, that every people, before they were civilized, were plunged in the darkness of barbarism; that they became civilized, after a lapse of time, only by the introduction of knowledge, the fruit of instruction and experience. To acquit ourselves of the first debt of Government, Public Instruction has eminently engaged our attention. We have requested from other nations, learned Professors and skilful Artists of every kind, to introduce into the kingdom the sciences and arts.

"The Professors and Artists who come to devote themselves to the instruction of youth, shall be effectually encouraged and protected. They shall experience complete toleration. The difference of nation, or of religion, shall form no motive of exclusion. We shall attend to nothing but merit and abilities. The deserving man—no matter what the country which gave him birth, what the creed in which he has been trained—shall always be well received, and shall enjoy the advantages of safety and protection which

our laws accord to strangers of all nations inhabiting the kingdom.

"Haytians!" he cries, as he approaches the conclusion, "twenty-six years of revolution, as yet without example in the history of the world, thirteen of independence gloriously obtained, have purchased these great events. No, we are not the same persons! What a prodigious change has been effected in all that surrounds us! Formerly, with humble brow, with eyes attached to the ground, assimilated to the brutes, crouching to the lash of the tormentor, we lived indeed, but we were dead to the universe; we had faculties, but those faculties were crushed under the load of servitude and of ignorance! The cry of liberty was heard—we burst our chains. With elevated front, with eyes directed to the heavens, we can contemplate the works of Divine Munificence! Restored to the dignity of man and society, we acquire a new existence; our faculties unfold themselves; a new career of happiness and glory is opened before us. Almighty God! superior Arbiter of the Universe, thanks be to thee forever! receive our vows and our devotion! Ye virtuous philanthropists, friends of humanity! contemplate your work, the fruit of your cares and labours. Redouble, if that is possible, your zeal, your activity, in the cause of the human race. The Haytians will justify your generous endeavours by living facts and examples.

"In vain, hereafter, will the detractors of the human race urge their sophisms and exceptions: instead of answering, let us march with rapid strides towards civilization. Let them, if they please, contest the existence of our intellectual faculties, affirm our partial or total inaptitude for the sciences and arts: let us answer them by irresistible arguments; let us convince the impious by facts and examples, that the Blacks, in like manner as the Whites, are men, and the workmanship as well as they, of Omnipotent Wisdom."

Agreeably to these views, the king of Hayti has commissioned some distinguished philanthropists in this country, not only to engage proper persons to form a complete seminary of education, calculated to teach all the

branches of art and science, and adapted to the richer classes, but also to obtain what assistance is practicable for affording education to the great body of the people : and this Society has also been called upon to aid this excellent cause, by supplying Masters for Elementary Schools.

In this region, therefore, a new field appears to be opened. And if it is an undeniable fact, that the British System is peculiarly calculated to surmount the great difficulties that oppose themselves to the introduction of knowledge where it has before been quite neglected, and that its acquisition will not require great expense of time or money—how important an instrument may it not become, in the hands of Divine Providence, to a large community of those of our fellow men, who have too long been considered as incapable of being raised to the dignity of men, to the invaluable blessings of civilization, and to the ability of strengthening their faith, hope, and charity, from those sacred oracles which, by divine aid, were destined to become the means of salvation for them as well as for ourselves !

ORDINATIONS.

In Marshfield, the Rev. Martin Parris.

At St John's Church, Providence, April the 13th, Rev. Jonathan Wainwright, resident at Cambridge, was admitted by the Rt. Rev. Bishop Griswold, to the Holy Order of Deacon.

At Chatham, Rev. Stephen Raymond.—Rev. Mr Shaw, of Eastham, made the Introductory Prayer ; Rev. Mr. Thompson, of Rehoboth, preached the Sermon ; Rev. Mr. Lincoln, of Falmouth, made the Consecrating Prayer ; Rev. Mr. Burr, of Sandwich, gave the Charge ; Rev. Mr Simpkins, of Brewster, addressed the Church and Society ; Rev. Mr. Johns, of Orleans, expressed the Fellowship of the Churches ; and Rev. Mr. Hayward, of Barnstable, made the Concluding Prayer.

OBITUARY.

In Hanover, N. H. John Wheelock, L. L. D. President of Dartmouth University.

In Boston, Caleb Bingham, Esq.

In Philadelphia, Rev. Emmanuel Nunez Carvalho, pastor of the Hebrew Congregation.

In Saco, Hon. Cyrus King, late member of Congress.

In Richmond, Virginia, Ebenezer Preble, Esq. of Boston

In Roxbury, Con. widow Deborah Armstrong, aged 63 : she fell into a well while drawing water, and was drowned.

In West Chester, Penn. Lewis Pennoch, aged 92, a respectable member of the Society of Friends.

In Palmer, Deacon Alpheus Converse, aged 65 : On his way to his barn, he dropped down and expired in a few minutes.

In New-York, Richard Fisher, aged 28, in a fit of insanity brought on by intemperance, went down a chimney where he died from suffocation.

In Boston, Mrs. Mary, wife of Mr. George Gould, aged 36—burnt to death by her clothes taking fire.—Miss Clarissa, daughter of John Wells, Esq. aged 19. Mr. Wells has lost four children in five months, of consumption, between the ages of 17 and 27.

APPOINTMENT.

Professor Day, of Yale College, has been chosen President of that Institution.

Candidates for the Ministry.

Mr. David Reed, Cambridge.

" Jonathan P. Dabney, do.

" Samuel Gilman, do.

" Hiram Weston, Duxbury.

" Thomas Savage, Cambridge.

" Seth Alden, do.

PEACE SOCIETY OF MAINE.

On the 31st of January a respectable Society was formed in Portland, by the name of "THE PEACE SOCIETY OF MAINE." The following gentlemen were elected as officers of the Society.

Rev. JESSE APPLETON, D. D. Pres't.

Hon. MATTHEW COBB, Vice Pres't.

S. LONGFELLOW, Jr. Esq. Treasurer.

Hon. SAMUEL FREEMAN, Cor. Sec'y.

Mr. E. H. COBB, Rec. Sec'y.

Rev. E. PAYSON,

Rev. I. NICHOLS,

Hon. PRENTISS MELLEN,

Simon GREENLEAF, Esq.

} Trus-
tees.

NOTICE BY MESSRS. WELLS AND LILLY.

THE time having expired for which the undersigned agreed to print and publish the *Christian Disciple*, and the work having been transferred to J. T. BUCKINGHAM as printer and principal agent, in connexion with WEST & RICHARDSON as publishers,—the subscribers and agents are hereby informed that the Bills issued the last year, and all the accounts which remain unpaid, are now to be settled for the editor, with his agents, at the Bookstore of WEST & RICHARDSON, No. 75, Cornhill.

WELLS & LILLY.

Boston, May 10, 1817.

NOTICE BY THE EDITOR.

THE Editor of the *Christian Disciple* has occasion to inform the patrons, agents, and subscribers for the work, that the accounts are now in the hands of JOSEPH T. BUCKINGHAM as printer and principal agent, in connexion with Messrs. WEST & RICHARDSON as publishers. On a recent examination of the books it has been found that a *large majority* of the subscribers have been punctual in their payments ; for which the Editor presents his grateful acknowledgements. But he has reason to regret that a considerable number of the subscribers appear on the books as indebted for all the volumes of the work from its commencement, and others as indebted for two or three volumes prior to the present year. In conducting such a work some mistakes are to be expected ; and the Editor cannot but fear that some of those who appear on the books as indebted for *three or four years*, prior to 1817, have either failed of receiving their copies, or of being credited for money which they have paid. For it seems hardly credible that men of reputation, integrity and benevolence, would continue, *four or five years*, to receive such a work, *at the expense of the Editor*, without paying any part of the very moderate price at which the copies are distributed. But if any have been thus negligent, they are entreated to consider, whether this is doing to others as they would that others should do unto them,—and whether they are not in duty bound to make *immediate payment*. As the Editor aims to conduct the work on the principles of peace and good will to men, it would be painful to him, if any other than pacific measures should be necessary to collect the money which is due. He therefore earnestly requests of all who have been delinquent, that they would adopt such measures for settling their accounts as the laws of equity and benevolence require.—It will be remembered that the pay for the fifth volume will be due on the delivery of the next Number.

May, 1817.